

Do adults need vaccination against hepatitis B?

What is hepatitis?

Hepatitis is a liver disease. There are 3 main types of hepatitis caused by viruses: hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C. Hepatitis A and hepatitis B are vaccine-preventable. This means vaccines may help protect you from these 2 diseases. There is no vaccine for hepatitis C.

What is hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is a contagious liver disease caused by a virus. Hepatitis B can cause a short illness or, in about 6% to 10% of adults, lead to a lifelong illness. In patients with lifelong illness, it can also cause liver failure, liver cancer, or even death.

What are the symptoms of hepatitis B in adults?

- Fever
- Headache
- Tiredness or weakness
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea and vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Muscle and joint pain
- Dark urine
- Light-colored bowel movements
- Yellow skin and eyes
- Skin rashes

How can you get hepatitis B?

Hepatitis B is usually spread by contact with blood or other body fluids from a person infected with the virus. You can get hepatitis B by:

- Having sex with an infected person
- Sharing a needle for drug use with an infected person
- Getting cut or stuck with an infected sharp instrument or needle

In addition, traveling to a country where hepatitis B is more common may put you at greater risk for infection.

How can you help prevent hepatitis B?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends vaccination against hepatitis B for people at risk for this disease. For example, the CDC has identified diabetes as a risk factor and recommends vaccination against hepatitis B for people with diabetes who are 19 to 59 years of age. If you are 60 years of age or older and have diabetes, your healthcare provider can help you decide whether vaccination is right for you.

Hepatitis B vaccination may not result in protection for every adult vaccinated.

Know your risk for hepatitis B infection.

Ask your healthcare provider if hepatitis B vaccination is right for you.

